846 On the second day after the delivery the mother may go outside to relieve herself, but otherwise she stays in the house for eight or ten days. Then she rubs herself and the child daily with red wood, for a month if she is in the village of her parents or for two months if she is in her husband's house. Only after this period has elapsed does she again take up her customary work.

834 845 The woman has to observe a special diet before and after the confinement only with respect to the food taboos discussed previously. On the other hand, she must abstain from sexual intercourse until the child can walk (two years), for if she does not, the worst, even death, is to be feared for the little one. Of course, especially towards the end of this period, a great many infringements of this taboo occur; in such a case one speaks of a tsǎbe bǒ́ngo (literally: to cast the children away, to thrust them away from oneself).

853 862 The child is nursed for a like period since the milk is supposed to diminish and dry up only after resumption of regular sexual intercourse. However, the flow of milk resumes in case of renewed pregnancy, so in that case the child can again be nursed. Even later, often until the seventh year, the sturdy urchin now and then still enjoys the sweet draught. If the mother is tired of giving the breast, she simply rubs her nipples with pepper (Capsicum).

/277/ Section 19

Childhood and Games

000 1. Names and name-giving. Time at which the name is given, announcement of the name. -- Names given by the mother. -- Variation of names among the subtribes. -- Classification of names. -- Names with explanation: A. Boys' names and their classification; B. Girls' names. -- Nicknames, jocular verse with nicknames. -- Full name (father's name, kin group, name of the mother's kin group), example. -- Series of

561 [843] no more than a mere conventional taboo, as with certain words considered crude in French. At birth and until weaning a baby is ntyen (nken) or nkeñelé.

● [862] After weaning, which usually occurs when the child begins to walk by itself, between eighteen months and two years, the nken becomes a mongô (mone fam = boy; mone minga = girl); an uncircumcised 561 boy is called more specifically nsôsôl.

881 [304] Circumcision takes place between eight and twelve years of age (1), before the first premonitory signs of puberty, especially the

1. In former times it was sometimes put off until the youth had killed his first enemy. See Trilles (no. 166) and Largeau (no. 48).

appearance of the first pubic hair (afañ, related to the verb fañ = to do well, correctly, on purpose, from the masculine root FA?). The circumcised boy, ntyi'an, "cut one," becomes an adolescent, ndôman, a term also meaning "son" (in relation to a man, see above, p. 63). Correspondingly, a pubescent girl becomes ngon (which can mean at the same time young girl, daughter of a man, or moon: ayene ngon, "to see the moon," that is, to be menstruating), or also élenan. /57/

The adolescent boy is still ébis, uninitiated. The missions have now adopted the term mvôn, "initiated," to denote church members. Formerly, one became mvôn after initiation, mostly in the great national so initiation, the members of which were called monewôsô (probably "child of the death /la mort/ of the sô"; compare this with the joking relationship, awusô = the dying /le mourir/ of the sô).

561 [882] After initiation, that is, somewhere between the sixteenth and twentieth year, a young man though of military age was not yet a [884] nya môtô, a true person. This he became only upon marriage, when he attained what might be considered his legal, civil, even economic, majority.

561 [885] A girl, ngon, who became ngal or nya ngal, a true woman, by losing her virginity, after marriage was nya minga, a /married/ lady, and ésila or ékua, a matron, when she had brought up her first children. A man with grandchildren was ntole môt, an elder, usually [888] around forty; this was the highest possible social position. Indeed,

551 epicene but tend to be attributed more to a particular sex—thus, it is rather rare to find a girl called Ze or a boy Nyangono.

854 In any case a baby, ntyen or nkeñelé, is not considered a human [858] being until it receives a name. After the first going out from the 551] house /the churching/ and until weaning, that is, for eighteen months or two years, the mother carries it everywhere with her, in a fold of her loincloth or in a sling for the purpose, doé or awoé, then, when it can stand by itself, astride her hip. The nkeñelé is given almost no training; the mother gives it the breast whenever the baby cries and does not attempt toilet training; a father occasionally plays with sons, rarely with daughters. Older sisters help the mother to take care of the baby, for instance, watching it in the shade while she is working in the fields or carrying the baby for her when she is overburdened.

862 Weaning often occurs in stages; the child begins to take solid food while still at the breast, sometimes before it is a year old. But it [859] does not stop being considered a baby, nkenele, and become a child, mongó, until it walks and begins to talk pretty well. From that time 854 on, it must learn to respect its personal prohibitions and clan taboos; often an older brother or sister will be charged to supervise him. Separation of the sexes increases with age; at about the fourth year children are no longer allowed to see adults of the opposite sex naked; around the fifth year, boys and girls, bo'befam and bo'binga, stop [857] playing together.

857 Games are to a great extent mixed with the learning of future tasks: 861 little girls play at housekeeping and sometimes with dolls; little boys hunt rats with the bow, throw small assagais at moving targets, set snares, etc. But there are also "free" games like jacks, cat's cradle, blindman's buff, common to both sexes, ndongo tops made of snail shells for boys, émvala or /a kind of/ dance for girls. Children also have their own dances distinct from those of adults and peculiar to each sex. They start working as soon as they know the taboos, girls helping their mothers, boys beginning to learn masculine crafts by preparing materials; stripping leaves from folioles of raffia "bamboo," barking and pounding lianas to be made into ropes, scraping skins, etc.

The children of a village play in bands, but practical training and the teaching of traditions is carried on at home, under father or 861 mother, according to the /child's/ sex. However, preparation for